

EPA Bans Two Types of Waste Disposal Systems

GWPC #00-1
July, 2000

NOTICE TO LOCAL OFFICIALS

New Requirement

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently banned the construction and permitting of **NEW Large Capacity Cesspools** and **NEW Motor Vehicle Waste Disposal Wells** across the United States including Indian Country.

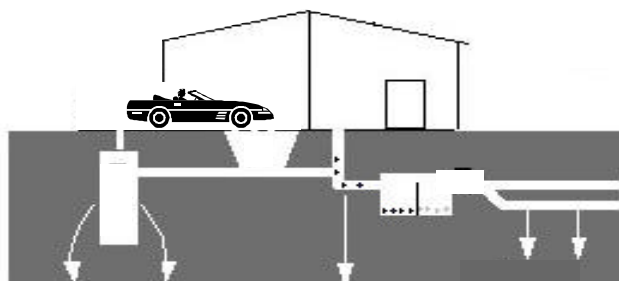
Purpose of Ban

These two waste disposal systems have a large potential to contaminate underground sources of drinking water. This new rule will prevent contamination and protect public health by eliminating disposal of wastes through these systems.

Your Responsibility

We need your assistance to implement this regulatory revision by making modifications to local codes and ordinances, discontinuing the permitting of these systems and providing notification to the affected facility owners to discontinue the construction of these systems.

EPA Bans NEW Motor Vehicle Waste Disposal Wells Nationwide as of April 5, 2000



As of April 5, 2000:

- ✓ No new permits for these systems are allowed.
- ✓ No new floor drains tied to septic systems or dry wells that receive waste from vehicle repair facilities are allowed.

Motor Vehicle Waste Disposal Wells are shallow waste water disposal systems (septic systems, cesspools or drywells) that receive or have received fluids from vehicle repair or maintenance activities often through floor drains or wash basins in the service facilities.

Facilities that might have a motor vehicle waste disposal well include: service stations, auto body repair shops, automotive repair shops, new and/or used auto dealerships, specialty repair shops such as transmission, brake and muffler repair, fire stations, county or municipal garages or any facility that performs vehicle repair work.

EPA Bans NEW Large Capacity Cesspools Nationwide as of April 5, 2000

A **Cesspool** is a drywell that receives untreated sanitary waste containing human excreta, which sometimes has an open bottom and/or perforated sides, and is completed above the water table so that its bottom and sides are typically dry except when receiving fluids.

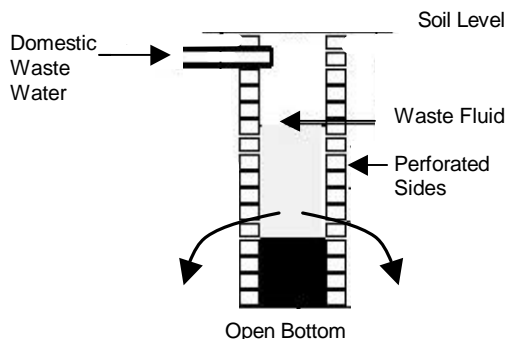
EPA defines **large capacity** as:

1. Any **residential** cesspool used by a multiple dwelling, community or regional system for the disposal of sanitary wastes (for example: a duplex or apartment building) or,
2. Any **non-residential** cesspool that has the capacity to serve 20 or more people per day (for example: a rest stop, restaurant or church).

*States may use a different criteria such as flow rate.

As of April 5, 2000:

- ✓ No new permits for large capacity cesspools are allowed.



Some States have already banned Large Capacity Cesspools. If allowed in your state, existing Large Capacity Cesspools must be closed by April 5, 2005.

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SOURCES OF REGULATORY INFORMATION

Alaska - Jonathan Williams, USEPA Region 10, (206) 553-1369

Idaho - Mike Piechowski, Idaho Department of Water Resources, (208) 327-7956

Oregon - Barbara Priest, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, (503) 229-5945

Washington - Mary Shaleen Hansen, Washington Department of Ecology, (360) 407-6143

Indian Lands - Jeff Kenknight, USEPA Region 10, (206) 553-0226

General Issues - Calvin Terada, USEPA, Region 10, (206) 553-4141

USEPA Region 10 Webpage: www.epa.gov/region10

USEPA Region 10 Hotline (800) 424-4EPA or National Hotline (800) 426-4791

Ground Water Protection Council (405) 516-4972 <http://gwpc.site.net>

These new requirements were adopted by the EPA on December 7, 1999. The text of the regulations is found in Vol. 64 of the Federal Register starting at page 68545.

How Does the Ban Affect You as a Local Official?

NO NEW PERMITS AND NO NEW CONSTRUCTION

- ✓ If you are responsible for **permitting** new floor drains, septic systems, cesspools, and similar devices at motor vehicle related facilities or for cesspools at multi-family dwellings or non-residential facilities →
- ✓ If you are responsible for **building inspections** at new motor vehicle related facilities or multi-family dwellings or non-residential facilities →
- ✓ If you are responsible for establishing and enforcing **city codes and ordinances** →

You can no longer authorize the construction or installation of Motor Vehicle Waste Disposal Systems or Large Capacity Cesspools.

Please notify facility owners that these waste disposal systems are no longer allowed.

IMPORTANT NOTICE